DOWNTOWN EAST / NORTH LOOP MASTER PLAN



Figure 2.6 Attributes of Complete Communities

shop in the same neighborhood as where they live. Even if residents choose not to live, work, and shop in the same given neighborhood, the intermingling of commercial and residential uses is critical to establishing a city that has activity, vitality, and safety at all times of the day and week. It is essential that there is always somebody coming and going — whether it is to and from their job or to and from their home. For this reason it's important to overcome the temptation to think of one part of downtown as the place where people work, another part as the place where people are entertained, another where people live, and so on.

Commercial enterprise should be developed throughout the downtown, albeit in different densities and formats depending on the location or neighborhood, where that development is occurring. High-density office development should continue to be concentrated in the Downtown Core, but that does not mean that it should not and cannot exist at other scales and in other formats in other parts of Downtown. Likewise, large hotels may choose to cluster within the Core or close to the Convention Center, but if a developer can "make a go" of lodging within another part of downtown, that use should continue to be allowed and encouraged.

Retail Strategies

A healthy retail landscape is a prime requisite for successfully developing Complete Communities in Downtown East and the North Loop. New and current local residents need to be able to purchase the goods and services required to carry out their daily lives. It is critical for policymakers to remember the timeless real estate mantra "location, location, location." To simply decree, for example, that all ground floor, mixed-use development should be designated retail would doom too many of those spaces to failure. The key is to pick strategic locations that will serve as catalysts for further retail growth and to establish a sense of place surrounding those retail nodes.

The City of Minneapolis must ensure the ability to develop "at-

grade" neighborhood-based retail districts within the Project Area. It should ensure that these retail centers are brought "on line" in manageable increments and given every opportunity to take hold and prosper. If a retail center is too ambitious for its marketplace, and it flounders, the perception that the area is failing will prompt even further failure and begin a downward spiral that the City would have a very difficult time recovering from. Several key principles should be the foundations for encouraging and sustaining retail within the Project Area and throughout Downtown Minneapolis:

Concentrate on providing neighborhood commercial and retail services: Downtown should remain a strong regional center for goods and services. However, another layer of goods and services also must be available to new and existing residents — neighborhood retail and commercial services. Emerging and existing neighborhoods will only be sustainable if they offer residents choices for obtaining life necessities within walking distance from home. Such necessities include groceries, hardware, drycleaning, and other retail and professional services (see Figure 2.6, adjacent).

Retail must be strategically located: While the concept of creating space for neighborhood retail on every Downtown street corner is attractive, the reality is that the market is not likely to support a high proliferation and variety of new spaces over the next twenty years (see Chapter Two: Market Analysis). Nevertheless, there are specific sub-sectors of retail that can be expected to grow in Downtown Minneapolis. Retail growth should be strategically clustered at LRT stations, major intersections, or along existing or emerging commercial corridors such as Washington Avenue. Once key locations are established, it is more likely that new start-ups and expansion might survive in mid-block or interstitial locations.

Establish critical mass at selected locations: Rather than designate a requirement for at-grade retail everywhere within the Project Area, this plan proposes that retail development should occur first at specifically identified streets and intersections, par-